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### THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THOMAS HILL GREEN'S PHILOSOPHICAL AND RELIGIOUS TEACHING.<sup>1</sup>

BY PERCIVAL CHUBB.

The assertion that we live in a revolutionary age is now commonplace enough not to excite feelings of consternation among educated people. We most of us admit the fact, and, except at moments when social disturbances make it especially evident, it has ceased to disquiet us. Occasionally some persons whose recollection reaches back to the "good old days" are startled into a new sense of the change that is coming over things, or slumbering orthodoxy is awakened to the fact that beneath the surface of society there is at work a powerful leaven of skepticism and of revolt against "the established fact" in religion, science, art, and social life, a leaven of new ideas and new aspirations. Thus, when "Robert Elsmere" was published, a fresh fit of dismay seized the hosts who walk in the beaten paths of dogmatic Christianity, although the doubts which turned the hero of that novel from his first faith have long been current coin among thinking people, and are quite familiar in the literature of the age. The novel only expressed, in a way to arrest popular attention, what is taking place all around us—the dissolution and rejection of the old view of the world. The old conception of the universe,

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<sup>1</sup> This was one of a series of three lectures on T. H. Green's life and teaching. It was delivered to a mixed audience, and written with such an audience in view.

which gave a unity to common thought and life, is breaking up; the old sanctions of right and duty are ceasing to bind; the old order of society is called in question—ay, is openly rebelled against—by masses of people driven by discontent born of a new vague feeling of injustice and of hope. The evidences of this change (especially of the social change) may be less obvious, and the sense of it less acute, in America than in Europe, where the signs of upheaval are frequent and unmistakable; but there are clearly marked signs here, too—signs visible from Europe; which is indeed only to be expected, seeing that America now forms part of that close confederation of nations which share in the influences of a single Time-Spirit.

The truth is, then, if we come to realize our situation, that our lives are cast in a momentous epoch of the world's history. As Mrs. Lynn Linton wrote a year or two ago: "We are in the midst of one of the great revolutions of the world. The old faiths are losing their hold and the new are not yet rooted; the old organization of society is crumbling to pieces, and we have not even founded, still less created, the new." If that is true, a great task is imposed upon us, the task of building a new world; of finding a new faith and establishing a new social order.

If we ask ourselves what is the first and the main work to be undertaken in the pursuit of this end, we shall find, I think, that it is an intellectual work. If the world is to be once more for us what it was to those of old, a cosmos, a divine unity; if life is to have a rational meaning which gives it deep significance and worth; we must go in quest of a new philosophy which shall satisfy the modern mind's requirements, and with them the requirements of the heart and imagination. As a matter of fact, we find numbers of people who recognize that this is the task of the age. Some stand appalled before it, not knowing where to turn for help. Others seem to get a certain satisfaction either in Agnosticism or in a gospel of Culture which counsels them to seek consolation and delight in a nosegay of ideas (if I may be allowed the phrase) culled from "the best that has been thought and said in the world." There is a strenuous and sincere Agnosticism which commands all our respect and requires our consideration. It is, in the view of the present writer, the consequence of taking a wrong turn in the road of thought and getting into a *cul-de-sac*. But

the *cul-de-sac* is genuine, and we sympathize with the baffled pilgrim. There is, however, another and more prevalent kind of Agnosticism which is the mere outcome of intellectual indolence; and that is simply deplorable. As for Culture, its nosegay may be pretty, but the flowers are separate and are apt to fall to pieces at any moment; moreover, plucked from the shrubs which bore them, they are without the sap of life and must, sooner or later, fade and droop.

Now, no man has felt the stern necessity for a sound and thorough philosophy as the basis of a worthy life and a means of deliverance from our present dangers, more than the late Professor Green. No one has appreciated more keenly than he the evils that result from contentment with that fortuitous concourse of ideas, miscalled Culture, which affects to do duty for a philosophy. No one has seen more clearly the hopelessness and, as he believed, the error of the modern Agnosticism which results in an intellectual deadlock. It seemed to him that, without some rational—*i. e.*, consistent—view of the world and of human life, men tended more and more to be ruled by personal taste and inclination, and to be driven by the pressure of circumstances, instead of resisting circumstances with a will that is firm in its allegiance to principle. In this tendency he saw the seeds of modern decadence; and he attributed to it the disappointing results of so many originally hopeful movements of reform in the past. For him the only safety lay in the domination of our spiritual life by our intellect, in the subjection of feeling and impulse to reason and will. It is a notable saying of his that—

“It is the true Nemesis of human life that any spiritual impulse not accompanied by clear and comprehensive thought is enslaved by its own realization.”

This saying gives the key to his work as a philosopher; and it will be readily seen how unsatisfactory to him were some of the most marked tendencies of modern life. The fashionable rejection of philosophy seemed to him disastrous. In his earliest essays we find him tilting against the great enemies of integrity in our personal and national life—divided, unharmonized knowledge and detached thinking. He says:

“To be free, to understand, to enjoy, is the claim of the modern spirit. It is a claim which is constantly becoming more

articulate and conscious of itself. At the same time it is constantly finding expression in practical contradictions of thought, which rhetoric, itself the child of the claim, is always at hand to manipulate, to entangle, to weave into the feelings and interests of men. The result is the diffusion over society of a state of mind analogous to that which we sometimes experience when discussion has carried us a long way from our principles and we find ourselves maintaining inconsistent propositions."

Similarly, in the Introduction to his latest work, the "Prolegomena to Ethics," we find him, with the Culture gospel of Matthew Arnold in his mind, insisting on the unsatisfactoriness of the position in which men allow certain ideas, derived from poetry and philosophy, "to a joint lodgment in their minds, with inferences from popularized science, which do not admit of being reconciled with these deeper convictions in any logical system of beliefs."

In this way it is Green's immediate significance as a philosopher that his philosophy is brought into close relation with the needs and insufficiencies of the age. The preceding quotations make his position clear. On the one hand he sees that a mind, divided against itself because it has no co-ordinating creed or philosophy is necessarily weak and ineffectual. On the other hand, he sees that, so far as there is a popular philosophy—the philosophy of scientific Materialism and Agnosticism, of which Mr. Herbert Spencer is the most distinguished exponent—it is a very slough of despond and confusion. It is this philosophy that he has constantly in his mind, and that acts as a foil to his own views. The further value of Green's philosophical teaching, in relation to that work of reconstruction which lies before us, is that it branches out, as by a natural growth, to the domains of religion, ethics, and politics. These are all co-ordinated in one organic view of life. I venture to think, then, that Green is one of the men who has a message for the new time, and that he will be found to be one of our deliverers in this present intellectual and moral crisis.

In order to understand Green's philosophical work, it will be necessary to take a short survey of the development of English thought during the last two centuries. This is all the more necessary, because his own work was based on a minute inquiry

into the ancestry of latter-day thought in England. He went back to the first founders of modern speculation, Locke and Berkeley and Hume; and his earliest important production was his lengthy Introduction to the works of Hume—perhaps the most subtile piece of criticism which has appeared in recent times. Here he discovered the parentage of our modern errors. He found that our philosophy was, as to its first principles, just where Hume had left it. The wave of philosophical thought which had gathered in Germany had for the most part gone over its head. Worse still, our English thinkers did not seem to see what Kant saw with alarm—that with Hume philosophy had been brought to an *impasse*. That was just the reason why it had made no further step forward in England; it had accepted Hume's—which are Locke's—postulates, and had necessarily been barren of any noteworthy progeny.

At the beginning of this century Carlyle, touched with the emancipating spirit of German thought, which had extricated itself somewhat from the Humean coils, found philosophy in England a “mud-philosophy”; and poured his fierce but necessarily ineffectual anathemas upon it—ineffectual, that is, except in so far as they kept alive the stubborn but unreasoning spirit of revolt against the mud-philosophers. His rebellion typifies the history of spiritual life in England since Hume, which has been largely one of opposition between professional philosophy and some of the chief forces in literature. If we call over the roll of philosophers we shall see that for the most part they have been the descendants of Hume—all with a marked family likeness. Scotland has produced a few recalcitrants—Reid, Stewart, Hamilton; but they were not big enough to turn the current, and indeed had not “the root of the matter in them,” to use a favorite expression of Green's. Tracing the main line of descent in England, we find that Hume begat Hartley, Hartley begat James Mill and Bentham, who begat John Stuart Mill; but here the type undergoes a little modification through alliance with another family—the physical scientists. Darwin and the Evolutionists appear and prove immensely attractive to the philosophers. The union produces the full-fledged scientific, materialistic philosophy of Lewes and Spencer and their adjuncts. Thanks to the wonderful clew to history which evolution has undoubtedly supplied, the marvellous vistas of time and

space and change which science has disclosed, and even more to the materialistic, commercial tendencies of the age—thanks to these, I say, the philosophy of evolution, as it is styled, has carried all before it, and Herbert Spencer is now the ruling light in the philosophic firmament. But already his beams have begun to pale by the rising of a new and larger light.

We must note, however, before passing on to investigate this new and hopeful illuminant, that the philosophers have not, as I suggested, had it all their own way. Arrayed against them all along has been a line of poets and writers whose teachings have been the negation of the ruling philosophy. At the end of last century and the beginning of this, we have Wordsworth and Coleridge and Shelley giving song to the old faith in a spiritual world and a spiritual presence in the heart of man and nature. German influences, although they do not touch the hard-hearted philosophers, touch the *littérateurs*. Kant and Fichte and Schelling and Goethe and Schiller have their disciples in Coleridge, De Quincey, Maurice, Carlyle, and others. There are frequent revolts and reactions. The finer spirits at Oxford get comfort in the peace and charm of Catholicism, and give us the Tractarian Movement. Maurice and Kingsley rebel in the Church. Emerson conveys across the ocean the message of Transcendentalism. Tennyson and Browning hand on the fire of the former faith in God and the future. A fierce Protestantism against Materialism in thought and life utters its voice in Ruskin. Still, all these influences have been overborne to a dangerous degree by the dead weight of modern materialistic civilization, which naturally finds congenial sustenance in a materialistic philosophy. That philosophy is separatistic and disintegrating in its influence; and, as I have remarked, has not, in Green's opinion, any power of reconstruction in it. We must replace it by a new philosophy and a new attitude toward the facts of life—an attitude similar to that of the poets and religious teachers, but backed by a clearly reasoned and consistent creed.

The main lines of this new philosophy Green finds marked out by Kant and the post-Kantians. And I should have noticed, as one of the saving influences at work in our midst, the ascendancy which this philosophy has already gained here and there—in Scotland, for instance, where Kant and Fichte and Hegel have found

champions like Dr. Stirling and Dr. Smith the translator of Fichte. But the growth of this influence has really been contemporaneous with, and not anterior to, Green's career. Green, then, builds on Kant and his successors, Fichte and Hegel; but he revises their results, goes back once more to the main line of English development, and gives his work an English impress and a modern application.

We are now in a position to pass in review the leading tenets of Green's philosophy. It will be convenient if in our attempt to do so we set out, as he himself does, by showing the inadequacy and inconsistency of that which now prevails among us in England. This philosophy is, as I have just observed, a combination of the sensationalism of Hume and the naturalism of the scientific evolutionists. The one supplies an answer to the question, What is experience? or What is involved in knowledge? The other professes to answer the questions, What is man? What is his relation to Nature? How has he come to be what he is?

Now Hume, carrying with unerring logic the premises of Locke to their last conclusion, had arrived at the result that all knowledge is reducible to sensations. He said that all the simple elements of knowledge come to us through the senses, and all that we know consists in combinations and recombinations of these elements of sense. These combinations and recombinations, constituting ideas of varying complexity, are not the work of an arranging mind, but result from the tendency of the sensations to recur in their original order and to cohere in certain groups. The original sensations were called impressions; their reproductions—fainter than the originals—were called ideas. The idea of a horse, for example, is nothing but a reassemblage or faint reproduction in the mind of the complex of sensations which have constituted our manifold experiences of that animal. The sensations which in their union constitute its mane, associate themselves with the sensations which in their union constitute its tail; and so on with the rest of the beast. It all comes of ideas having an inexplicable habit of forming regular associations. That is all we can say of them. They do not inhere in anything, and may upset our expectations at any moment. Thus cause and effect are reducible to that orderliness of sequence in which certain sensations usually follow one another.



This doctrine of the association of ideas is a wonderful solvent ; it not only dissolves cause and effect, but it dissolves the idea of a mind, an Ego, an external world. If ideas make their associations on their own responsibility, there is obviously no need of a master of ceremonies, a director, or a referee. If a thing and a sensation are one and the same, then we may dispense with the unnecessary assumption of an external world. The curious tendency of these assumptions of cause and effect, of a self, of an external world, to form themselves, Hume never explained. In short, the whole philosophy is a *felo de se*. For, let us observe, the very initial distinction of an original sensation from its reproduction necessitates a distinguishing and recognizing mind ; it implies memory ; it implies judgment. The idea of orderliness in association or in sequence implies the same. Nevertheless, it is a fact that this contradictory philosophy has been good enough for the bulk of English philosophers since Hume ; and the same sensationalism and the same associationism survive in the materialistic philosophy advocated by men of no less eminence than Mr. Herbert Spencer. The theory of evolution has made the way much clearer for them. It did seem not a little difficult to account for the elaboration through a single person's experience of such a wonderfully complex system of associations as that which the man of to-day possesses. Evolution explains that it is not the work of the individual, but has been the work of ages. Man had a considerable number of associations stored up when he first appeared on the earth ; his sub-human ancestors, possessed of the power of hereditary transmission, left them as their legacy to him. In short, the slowly accumulated effects of experience have been handed on from generation to generation through a purely physical agency—the modification of bodily structure ; and so we no longer need to assume *a priori* forms of thought to account for elementary conceptions. Mr. Spencer has a more elaborate argument in support of his sensationalism ; but it is at bottom the same old contention that the edifice of thought is built up of bricks of sensation, cemented by the tendency to association. The only difference is that the flux of the mind's thoughts and sensations is styled a series of states of consciousness ; but it is still a straggling, disorderly procession with no spectator to view it, or know it as a procession.

But with Spencer we have something which Hume had not—

Nature, an external world. This is clearly necessary as a basis for the thesis that man is a product of Nature, and the latest phase in a process of animal or physical development. How does Mr. Spencer get his Nature, his external world? He assumes the reality of an external order and an elementary consciousness of it. He professes to prove the existence of such a reality, and its power of determining thought; but observe the flaw in the proof. He starts, as he must, from the conception of knowledge as involving a relation between a subject and an object. But he then proceeds to assign to one of the terms of this relation an independent, superior existence—in short, he destroys the correlation. The object, only known, to start with, in relation to a subject, is known also (by what is now said to be a deliverance of consciousness) as existing out of relation to it—*i. e.*, an object is supposed to be known after we have cancelled the knowing subject. Nay, more, the object is actually claimed to be the cause and determinant of the subject. The result is, in other words, that the objects of thought, while these are objects only by reason of there being a subject, are illogically supposed to be the cause of the subject which is the condition of their appearance. There is, of course, a great parade of demonstration in the “*Principles of Psychology*”; but that is, in brief, the sum of the argument. It is thus that we get the cause of thought and of man as external Nature. The way is clear for a natural history of man by the application of the evolution hypothesis.

Now let us see what Green—apart from the foregoing criticism which is really a rough epitome of his own arguments—has to say with regard to these views, and what is the truth which he opposes to them. In the first place, he affirms that of mere sensation we know, and therefore can say, nothing; it is an abstraction. Clearly, of sensation in general we can know nothing; we only know particular sensations. Let us take one. What is implied when we affirm the experience of a sensation of redness? Simply the fact that the mind has been at work distinguishing the sensation as one of redness from other sensations that are of different colors. Its reality is constituted for us by its relations to other colors—its place in the color scale. The greater the number of relations we are able to place it in, the fuller is the reality which it has for us. If we are uncultivated, these relations will be few; if we are sci-

entific specialists, they will be very numerous. Reality, "a fact," is not therefore sensation, but relation. An object of thought—and all objects are objects of or for thought—is what it is by reason of its place in that system of relations which constitutes the world as it exists for us—as known by us. If we are asked to give an account of an object, we shall tell what we know about it; and this statement will be in terms of its relation to other objects that we know. Our account will be true if it fits into the body of knowledge; if it is not in harmonious relation, if it does not square with other facts, it is false. Error, illusion, unreality is false relation. This is Green's first dissent and his first affirmation. Knowledge is *not* of sensations, but *it is* of relations.

But what is implied in relation? Firstly, two terms, and the affirmation of a connection between them—subject and object; we have a subject which cognizes itself as knowing (*i. e.*, is self-conscious), and a series or world of relations as known, from which it distinguishes itself. But we can say more than this. To know these as related we must be able to hold them together; we must discern them on comparison as distinct and different; and this power of comparison is possible only by seeing things together and simultaneously before the mind. In other words, the mind must be present at once to all the elements distinguished and compared. For instance, we are asked to pronounce as to which is the most brilliant of a number of colors arranged in a row. How do we decide? Only by carrying the recollection of each color with us as we pass from it to the next, and at the end of our survey holding the whole of them simultaneously in our mind for a decision. We are taken, let us suppose, to a color apart from these, and are asked whether we think it brighter than they. Our decision can be made only by holding our past experience of the many colors—which the mind has the power of recalling—and comparing it with the present experience of the one color. What does this signify? It signifies that the mind can grasp a past and a present at once; that it can comprehend more than one moment in time and more than one point of space. In fact, we see that we are obliged to postulate as a condition of experience or of judgment a mind that is fixed amidst the succession and change which we call experience. This is, I think, clear; but it is a very

important point in Green's philosophy, and we must be in no doubt about it. Let us put it in another way.

The mind is conscious of a succession of things in time, or, to make use of Spencer's phrase, a succession of states of consciousness. But it could not know succession unless it were not itself out of and apart from the succession. To use our former figure, we should not know a procession as such unless we were outside of it. One separate state of consciousness in a stream of such states could not know itself as a part of such stream without knowing itself as related to a before and an after in a process. Similarly with change. Change could not know itself as change unless it were something that remained unchanged amidst change. The conclusion is, then, that we must postulate as a condition of knowledge a mind or spirit out of time, therefore eternal; and out of space, therefore immovable, infinite or unbounded; and self-conscious—that is, distinguishing itself from a world of fact, which is, as we have seen, a world of relations.

Now we must ask, What is this world of relations present to consciousness, and what is the relation of consciousness to it? In the first place, let us note that consciousness does not make this world; it does not establish the relations, and it does not make them a system. The angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles, fire burns, the sun warms, quite apart from any will or any individual preferences of ours. (Hence the absurdity of the assertion made against the idealist—that the individual makes the world.) In the next place, observe that we only discover the relations as they exist in a unity or "cosmos of experience." That there is a unity, a law of things, a cosmos, is an axiom of the mind; thought, and even doubt itself, are meaningless without such an axiom. What, we proceed to ask, must we understand as implied by such a system of relations? We must conceive it as a unity in difference—that is, a number of distinct things held together in a harmony, each individual thing being what it is because of its place in the whole. Take the case of a house. The house is a unity composed of a number of distinct stones, and each stone has a meaning and a function derived from its relation to the whole structure. Now, the only way in which we can comprehend such a cosmos of relations—the only idea we can form of a differentiated unity or a unified differentiation—is in terms of mind. When we speak of a unity

we mean, first, a totality which has a unity for thought, and, secondly, that thought has gone to the making of this totality. That which requires thought for its comprehension implies thought in the constitution of it. It is only thought that can constitute a unity for thought. Wherever we come upon design we are obliged to postulate thought behind it. We assume a designer, or rather a designing mind. That is the very meaning of design—thought-relation. The relation is not in the separate things; it is in the idea or the thought that presides over the whole of which the things are constituent parts. This may be otherwise expressed by saying that the world as a related whole is essentially a rational world, or an embodiment of reason.

The conclusion to which we are brought by the foregoing argument is that man, as knowing a cosmos or rational world, is mind knowing and discovering mind. The human mind, defective in knowledge and power, confronts the universal mind expressed in the manifold of experience. This universal mind man only partially apprehends; and, because he only knows it in part and finds it difficult to piece the parts together, he labors under a sense of incompleteness. He forever seeks to widen his knowledge and harmonize its elements by exploring the heights and depths of the world of Nature and Man, which are equally the home of the Cosmic Mind. In other language, one Mind expresses itself *in* Man and, through Nature, *to* Man; and our mental growth is, in fact, our progressive assimilation of the Cosmic Mind, or the Cosmic Mind becoming more and more articulate in us. The self in us finds its enlargement and the possibility of its completion by its comprehension and assimilation of the not-self. We realize our imperfection because we dimly apprehend perfection; because the germ of the perfect is in us, and, in the longing for more knowledge and deeper life, stirs us to strive after the perfect. If we call the Universal Mind or Spirit, God, we shall, from Green's point of view, say that man has his being in and through God, and that God has his being—though not his whole being—in and through man. The selfhood of God is none other than the selfhood of man.

It will now be obvious enough wherein Green dissents from the evolution philosophy. The latter says that man is the product of Nature, in the sense that he is but the latest outcome of a process

of natural or material development—a child of matter and motion. He is merely a last link in a chain of cause and effect. But, as Green, in effect, would urge, to know himself as a link in a chain, man must know the chain. To know the chain, he must unlink himself, so to speak, and survey the long line of his fellow-links before and after—in short, he must cease to be a part of the chain. If, then, man were merely a product of Nature, he could not know himself as such, for he could not know Nature as a producing agency without standing apart from her. But he does know Nature, and, what is more to the point, he knows that he knows her. He knows himself as her spectator and interrogator. He stands firm amid her passing shows, noting her changes, remembering her history, comparing her past and present.

Man, according to Green, is not a piece of material Nature, nor is Nature herself mere matter and motion. She is traversed with the currents of thought—is, indeed, only the symbolic language of thought; known and knowable by man only because she speaks to him in his own speech. Man, instead of being a transient being in a transient world, is an eternal, spiritual being in an eternal, spiritual world. That perfect world he sees only a part of at a time, and probably can never see it in its entirety. He knows it now under the limitations of his animal organism and under the forms of time and space. But he knows that it is entire; he knows that his imperfection implies its perfection.

So far I have given merely a rough sketch of the basic elements of Green's thought or those features of it which separate him fundamentally from the naturalists or evolutionists. These are, after all, the main and important features. If we accept these, we have turned our backs upon a universe which is blind and speechless, and upon a humanity which is its pitiful sport and victim. We have gained a universe which is, as it were, the eye and tongue of an infinite perfection. We have exchanged a perishable and meaningless chaos for an eternal and purposeful cosmos.

But here I am already leaving philosophy, which should be a calm statement of ultimate truths, for religion, which is the response of the mind, heart, and imagination, in the contemplation of these truths. Without this response philosophy is barren and unprofitable; it fails in the purpose of its quest. For that quest,

the aim of which is to discover our true relations to the world, is made in the interests of our whole nature. Now, our nature is tripartite: we are beings of thought, feeling, and will, and find the fullest satisfaction only in harmonious thinking and feeling and acting. Religion is, I take it, at once the bond and the inspiration of this harmonious life. Its object is to keep us whole, so that the central energy and fire of life may circulate through us fully, and fuse us into a singleness of being. Religion takes philosophy for granted—not, of course, a dogmatic, finally fixed philosophy, but a philosophy which holds itself subject to correction and enlargement. It is the result of the union of the truths of philosophy with the impulsions of the heart.

Philosophy, as Green conceived it, gave us an incomplete self in a complete world, from which it could gain completeness. It prescribed as the aim of life the harmony or the fullest and closest union of the microcosm with the macrocosm. We may state this, in other words, as the perfection of character, which is the highest realization of our own powers in and through a true life in the world. We have two things implied here—a harmony within us in accord with a harmony without us. The outer or objective world is composed of Nature and Humanity. Nature has to be subjected to our uses; it has to be explored by Science, and ordered to the ends of beauty by Art. In the case of Humanity we are in a world of wills and personalities like our own, and our task is to harmonize these wills so that they may not conflict, but may mutually assist one another in the pursuit of a common good. This is the work of Ethics, Politics, and Education, with their subordinate sciences.

With this glance at the view of the world given us by philosophy, let us return to the place and function of religion. Religion, Matthew Arnold has said, is morality touched with emotion; but it is surely a larger and more fruitful description if we say that it is philosophy touched with emotion—that is, an emotional apprehension not only of the moral law, but of the world as a whole. The mood of religion is the mood in which the heart seizes upon the truths of philosophy, sublimates them, and gives them impassioned utterance in symbol and allegory. The spiritual presence which philosophy has discovered in Nature and in Man religion calls God, and, to aid its grasp and assimilation of this presence,

invests God with the idealized attributes of Man. Nature, as the conjoint seat and revelation of this divine presence, becomes a parable and a song. Before this now poetically or imaginatively clothed universe man falls down in wonder and worship, and strives through art and by noble conduct to express the depth of his passion and the beauty of his vision. He is impelled to find an outlet for this heightened thought and feeling and desire in great actions and in beautiful works. Thus for religion the web of common life is everywhere shot through with threads of loveliness. It sees the actual in the light of the ideal, man pregnant with divine possibilities, and nature full of deity.

“ Nothing’s small !

No lily-muffled hum of a summer bee  
But finds some coupling with the spinning stars ;  
No pebble at your foot but proves a sphere ;  
No chaffinch but implies the cherubim.

. . . Earth’s crammed with heaven,  
And every common bush afire with God.”

This, expressed somewhat popularly and emotionally, is the view Green took, and it finds frequent expression in his writings. It was his sense of the spiritual in Nature and Man that attracted him to the poetry of Wordsworth. His own nature was akin to Wordsworth’s in that he was given to the same “ impassioned contemplation ” ; only, in place of the lyrical utterance of the poet, we have the more sober speech of the philosopher, as though the bare, ungarnished statement of the truth were all-sufficing for the mind’s nutrition. It was not so much through the beauty of the world, as with the artist or poet, or its interest and intricacy, as with the scientist, that the power of religion laid hold upon Green ; but in the intellectual vision of the divine unity of the world and the mystical sense of the communion between the individual and the universal spirit. Whereas Wordsworth found the divine presence chiefly in Nature, Green found it equally—nay, more—in the history, experiences, and institutions of man. He saw everywhere traces of man’s consciousness of an ideal which man did not realize, but always in some way or other sought to approach ; and all human institutions were for him instances of man’s effort to express this ideal. Out of this perception came his eager desire to forward the



political movements of his time. Reform was for him the removal of those obstacles which stood in the way of the fuller and ever fuller expression of this ideal tendency in the heart of man.

But while Green was aware that in the religious life man gained the fulness of peace and joy, he was also keenly conscious of the impediments which thwarted the attainment of this religious life—the barriers of circumstance, the allurements of the senses, the incubus of doubt, the indolence of hopelessness and despair. The Christian sense of sin in the world and of morality as a hard struggle, was very strong in him; and it was this sense which invested the Christian scriptures of the New Testament—and especially the writings of St. Paul—with immense value and significance. He says in one place:

“Man knows that it is his littleness, not his greatness, that separates him from the divine; that not intellectual pride, not spiritual self-assertion, but the meanness of his ordinary desires, the degradation of his higher nature to the pursuit of animal ends, keep him under the curse.”

This gives us Green's conception of sin as partiality, defect, negation. It follows naturally from his view of the world. He has expressed himself more precisely in another place, where he says that, whilst “intellectual error consists in regarding the relations under which, at any given time, an object is presented to us, and which through the limitations of sense are necessarily partial, as the totality of its relations”; so “sin consists in the individual's making his own self his object, not in the possible expansion in which it becomes that true will of humanity, which is also God's, but under the limitation of momentary appetite or interest.”

He thought that no writer had given such telling expression of this conviction—of this sense of a war between the law in the members and the law of the spirit—as Paul. It was a matter of regret to him that the spiritual meaning of the Pauline writings had been obscured by the literal dogmatic interpretation in vogue among the orthodox. The two lay sermons of his, “The Witness of God” and “Faith,” are devoted to an attempt to bring out the real import and value of Paul's teaching; and in this he was doing very much the sort of work that Matthew Arnold did in “St. Paul and Protestantism.” He considered that great harm was inflicted on religion by making its truth and reality depend on

the truth of certain historical occurrences in connection with the life of Jesus Christ. The witness of God to man is not in any outward events, or signs, or wonders—if such were possible, which is not to be granted—but in the heart of man, and in the order and harmony of the world. The gift of the spirit is not a miraculous revelation through the utterances and acts of certain men, but “that recognition of an eternal relationship between God and man which carries with it a new insight into the things of God, and a new energy of love.” The importance of Christ to us lies not in his supposed advent as a Messiah, or his supernatural place in a scheme of redemption; but, as it lay for his apostle Paul, in the power of his spirit and example. The statement that he died and rose again the third day is of itself unimportant for spiritual ends, and tends to materialize them; whereas the symbolized fact, which is as the marrow of Paul’s teaching, that he died unto sin and rose into the higher life, is of central importance to us. The conception of a death into life puts the problem of the moral life in a striking and helpful manner, as even a man like Goethe saw. True faith is not faith in material resurrection, or in any other miraculous event; but faith in the higher leadings of the spirit that moveth in us, faith that all things work together for our good if we follow these. Everywhere around us we find religion mischievously identified with belief in miracle, and its supremacy assailed because miracles are no longer credited. Becoming aware that the religion so founded cannot stand, the skeptic disowns religion altogether. Surely no greater service can be done than to disengage religion from the clutches of such a foe.

Doubtless some will feel that Green shows too exclusive a preference for Christianity and too eager a desire to reinstate it, and it only, as the religion of the future. Many believe that what we have to look forward to is the foundation of a great world-religion, of which Christianity is a factor—may be even the most important factor—but still only a factor. And yet we must all recognize that this religion of the future will probably come through such an expansion of Christian teaching as Green was anxious to promote. One thing, at any rate, seems certain, that no religion can thoroughly serve us which does not include just that particular element which Green prized in Christianity—the keen sense of shortcoming in ourselves, and of the weight of

sin in the world, issuing in that embracing sympathy which is found in the case of the man of sorrows, acquainted with grief, the friend and uplifter of the guilty and helpless and outcast. Without this unshrinking sympathy with weakness and suffering and disease and failure, life becomes superficial and trivial. Bright and joyous and fair it may be for a time and for a few, as in the pleasurable days of pagan Greece and Rome, but it can never be founded on a solid and enduring basis, never reach down to the heart of things. The retention of this element is especially important in view of that work of social reformation which lies before us. It must be a great element in any worthy democracy.

So far I have been trying to express, mainly in my own words, the sense and gist of Green's religious views. It is well that he should be allowed to speak to us in his own words. Let us hear him. His ideal of life he described as that of "Christian Citizenship"—that is to say, a citizenship deriving its conception of the state and of civic virtue from Greece, but enlarged and consecrated by the Christian temper of brotherliness. Let us then see what Green's conception of Christianity was.

"The divine mind touches, modifies, becomes the mind of man, through a process of which mere intellectual conception is only the beginning, but of which the gradual complement is an unexhausted series of spiritual discipline through all the agencies of social life. In the nations outside Christendom, as a matter of history, this complement has not been vouchsafed, or only in the most limited and elementary way. Hence the idea of death into life, which is the seed of the divine in man, has there lain barren."

This idea is, he considers, the central idea of Christianity; and the test of its truth is in the life which it inspires. That is the only possible test of the truth of a practical idea.

"As the primary Christian idea is that of a moral death into life, as wrought for us and in us by God, so its realization, which is the evidence of its truth, lies in Christian love—a realization never complete, because forever embracing new matter, yet constantly gaining in fulness. All other evidence is fleeting and accidental, but this abides. Tongues cease, prophecies fail, knowledge—the mere unrealized idea—vanisheth away; but charity never faileth, and, in the higher life of the Christian society, we may recognize it and make it our own."

Hence religion consists not in word only, but in power; not in passive virtue, but in active righteousness. Its end and justification are in a pure, helpful, and self-denying life and in the formation of a character simple, sincere, and sympathetic.

"The least experienced among us must know that it is not in the outward cast of a life, but in the way of living it that the spirit of a man is shown; and that there are those about him in whose character, though with no outward mark of distinction, and perhaps under a surface of yet unconquered weaknesses, the love of God and the brethren is the ruling power. All he has to do is to share in the higher spirit of such men."

The refreshing touch of simplicity which there is in this passage meets us constantly in Green's writings on religion—the trait which made him an influence in Oxford. How rare and how inspiring it is to come upon a man who, besides being a subtle thinker and a power in the world of thought, retains this feeling for simple goodness and rightness of heart! The more so because it is this simplicity that we stand in danger of losing nowadays, hedged about as we are by the pretentiousness of modern life, with its polite artifices, its veneered manners, its little insincerities of intercourse, its smallness and triviality. The great preservative against these is the faith that helps us to keep a sort of child-like attitude of heart.

"If we are honest with ourselves we shall admit that something best called faith, a prevailing conviction of our presence to God and his to us, of his gracious mind toward us, working in and with and through us, of our duty to our fellow-men as our brethren in him, has been the source of whatever has been best in us and of our deeds. . . . Faith of this sort is the salt of the earth."

With one more short quotation, in which Green puts his finger upon the salient danger which besets the cause of religion among us, let us leave him:

"The enemy which religion, *i. e.*, a God-seeking morality, has now to fear, is not a passionate atheism. Such atheism is often a religion which misunderstands itself. . . . Not from it is our danger, but from the slow sap of an undermining indifference which does not deny God and duty, but ignores them; which does not care to trouble itself about them, and finds in our acknowledged inability to know them, as we know matters of fact, a new

excuse for putting them aside. It is this which takes off the native beauty from the fair forehead of a child-like faith, and leaves, not the scars of a much-questioning and often-failing but still believing search after God, whom so to seek is to find, but the vacancy of contented worldliness or the sneer of the baffled pleasure-seeker."

If, then, we think, as the great souls of all time have thought, that religion is the power that binds man to what is best and highest, we shall be on the alert against this "undermining indifference" and this "vacancy of contented worldliness" of which Green speaks. Is it not too true that modern civilization, with its sense of security, its comfort and luxury, and the ignoble greed of gain which the attractiveness of these has bred, tends to produce such an undermining indifference and contented worldliness? These, the enemies of religion, are the hindrances to that renascence of our social life of which I spoke in the opening of my paper. The first work in the promotion of that renascence is, I said, to gain a new philosophy—that is, a new view of the world, which shall give life unity and import. But it is a difficult task to induce men, prone to this indifference and worldliness and sorely tempted by it, to make the effort to think out a new philosophy of life. How are they to be braced to make it? What can we do to counteract the tendencies of the time? We cannot, of course, do anything until we ourselves have gained a new philosophy; and, having gained it, we must express it by word and deed. If we are bent on trying to find the philosophy, we cannot do better than go to Green. There is every indication that it is along the lines of his thought that advance will be made.

If, further, we pass from philosophy to religion, here again we shall find in Green a helpful ally. We may not get entire satisfaction from the form in which he would cast religion; but in the spirit of the religion which he upholds we cannot steep ourselves too deep. And one point upon which he insists, as we have already gathered, we can not pay too much heed to—that, if we wish to bear witness for religion, we must do so through our lives. Nothing promotes skepticism so much as disloyalty; it gives the skeptic, the cynic, and the indifferentist their chance and excuse. It is an undoubted fact that what, more than anything else, is bringing Christianity, and with it all religion, into disrepute

is the disloyalty of Christendom to the lofty professions of its creed. It is futile to profess to believe that all men are brethren, if we treat them as enemies on the mart and in the store. It is useless professing to believe that it is difficult for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, if we devote a life to getting rich. It is a mockery to declare adhesion to the principle that human greatness is won by service, if we despise those who serve, and strive for a worldly position in which we are the masters of many servants. If we follow Green's teaching, we must believe that the first condition upon which the revolution now in progress may be a change for the better, lies in our making our lives eloquent with the spirit of unswerving devotion to our ideal.

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## ON THE CONGRUENCE OF SINS AND PUNISHMENTS IN DANTE'S INFERNO.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF DR. J. A. SCARTAZZINI ("JAHRBUCH DER DEUTSCHEN DANTE-GESELLSCHAFT," VOL. IV, 1877) BY THEKLA BERNAYS.

According to Christian popular belief, an almost absolute transformation takes place in man at the moment of death. The life hereafter is not, in the first instance, the direct continuation of the psychic spiritual earth-life of the individual, but rather, according to current Christian notions, an entirely new life, with scarcely a resemblance to earth-life, and connected with this latter only inasmuch as in its immense variety it is conditioned by it (earth-life) for each individual. More clearly expressed, it depends upon the conduct of man while on earth—whether he will reach the abode of infinite blessedness or the regions of indescribable torture. But when once the narrow bridge is passed which forms the mysterious crossing between this world and the hereafter, then is fulfilled in its absolute sense the word: "The old is vanished; see, all has become new!" According to this conception, even the most individual thing in man, his consciousness, is subjected to a mighty change. The consciousness of one and the same individual changes in part as to its contents as soon as the journey through the dark valley is completed. The Christian who